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ENQUIRY

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INTO THE

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INWARD CALL

TO THE

HOLY MINISTRY.

St. Matthew ix. 38. and St. Luke x. 2.

*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, that
he will send forth Labourers into his Harvest.*

The SECOND EDITION.

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M.D.CC.XLIII.

EMERALD

INWARD CALL



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To the SERIOUS
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OF THE
Holy Christian Ministry,

THIS
Posthumous TREATISE

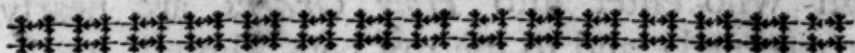
Is earnestly Recommended,

And Dedicated,

By the SON of the AUTHOR,

J. M.



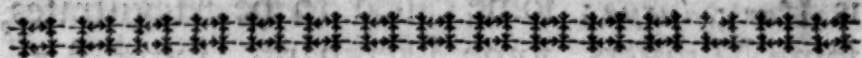


INTRODUCTION.

IN a friendly Conference of some Clergymen at a Country Town, who had met together for their mutual Diversion, in the Year 1703; the Subject of their Discourse accidentally turned upon the Question of the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry; and a *Presbyter* of bright Spirit, and no small Improvement, did boldly affirm, That there was nothing more requisite to satisfy the Conscience of One who was to enter into *Holy Orders*, with respect to any *Inward Call*, than was equally necessary to all other Men, who enter upon any other worldly Employment, how mean and despicable soever; vouching the Authority of Bishop *Sanderſon* in this Sentiment, and advancing that Bishop's Reasoning to support it. This occasion'd some warm Debate by the Opposition he received, in which the Author of the following ENQUIRY had taken part; who soon after had the following *QUESTIONS* and *ANSWERS* sent to him, by the aforesaid *Presbyter*, in the Manner of a *Challenge*.

It was to vindicate the Truth, in a Matter of Importance, in which the Honour of
CHRIST'S

CHRIST's Church, and the Consciences of all who enter into *Holy Orders*, are nearly concerned; and to use my best, though weak, Endeavour, to satisfy this Gentleman and a few others who seem'd inclined to take part with him, that I then took some pains to set this *Question* in a due Light, by this short *Treatise*. And because the perusal of it in MS. hath often contributed to give comfortable Satisfaction to devout and cautious Men before their receiving *Holy Orders*; and that it hath never since that time, been encountered with any Contradiction, though it has undergone the Examination of many learned Men: I have therefore adventured to publish it, in hopes that it may be of more general Use and Benefit. And seeing there is nothing advanced in it, as *necessary* in the *Question* whereof it doth treat, but what all who enter into *Holy Orders* are bound to have their Consciences satisfied in, though the *Church of England* had never appointed that *Question* which is the very first that is proposed to them, by the Bishop who gives them *Holy Orders*; therefore I can have no dread of being embarrassed and teased by any of that Communion; nor indeed by any but the *Freethinkers*, whose Favour or Contradiction I make no account of.



T H R E E Q U E R I E S

C O N C E R N I N G

The *Inward Call*, whether to the *Holy Ministry*, or to other Employments.

W I T H

ANSWERS thereunto, taken, Word by Word,
out of Bishop SANDERSON'S Sermon on
1 Cor. chap. vii. ver. 24.



Q U E R Y I.

*W*Hether only the Ministers of the Gospel
are obliged to have an INWARD CALL
from GOD to their Office? Or whether the
same Obligation be also incumbent upon all
others of whatsoever Imployment, i. e. Shoe-
makers, Weavers, or even People of such mean
and despicable Offices, as I forbear to name?

ANSWER, (taken out of Bishop Sanderson's Sermon, Sect. IV.) Every Man hath his proper Gift of God; one on this manner, and another on that, 1 Cor. vii. 7. Here
is

is ἱερὸν χρέισμα; some called to be Magistrates, some Ministers, some Merchants, some Artificers, some one thing, some another.

Again (Sect. 32.) Divines teach it commonly, and that truly, That every Man should have an *Inward Call* from God, for his particular Course of Life.

QUERY II. *By what Means Men may know what Employments they are inwardly called to; supposing it to be the HOLY MINISTRY, or any other Employment?*

ANSWER, (from the said Sect. 32) Herein our Enquiry must rest, especially upon *three* Things; our *Inclination*, our *Gifts*, and our *Education*. Concerning which, let this be the first Rule: Where these *three* Things concur upon one and the same Calling, our Consciences may rest assured that this Calling is fit for us; and we ought so far as it lyeth in our power, to follow that. This Rule, if well observed, is of excellent use for the settling of their Consciences, who are scrupulous and doubtful, concerning their *Inward Calling* to any Office or Employment.

Furthermore, (*ibid.*) If it shall please God to afford any of us, any farther Assurance than this can give us, by some extraordinary Work of his Spirit *within* us; we are to embrace it with joy and thankfulness, as a special Favour: But we are not to suspend our Resolution for the Choice of our Course, in expectation

tation of that *extraordinary* Assurance; since we may receive comfortable satisfaction to our Souls without it, by the ordinary Means now mentioned.

QUERY III. *Whether the above-mentioned Rule and Means, be sufficient to ascertain MINISTERS, as well as others of their INWARD CALL to their Office; or if they are to expect that their CALL should be notified to them, any other way?*

ANSWER, (taken out of the said Sect. 32.) Who need be scrupulous, where all these concur? Thy Parents have from thy Childhood destinated thee to some special Course, (admit the Ministry) and been at the Care and Charge to breed thee up in Learning; to make thee in some measure fit for it. When thou art grown to some maturity of Years and Discretion, thou findest in thyself a kind of Desire to be doing something that way in thy private Study, by way of Trial; and withal, some measure of Knowledge, Discretion, and Utterance, (though perhaps not in such eminent Degree as thou couldest wish, yet) in such a competency, as thou mayest reasonably persuade thyself, thou mightest thereby be able (with his Blessing) to do some good to God's People, and not to be altogether unprofitable in the Ministry. In this so happy concurrence of *Propension, Abilities, and Education*, make no farther Enquiry: Doubt not of

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thine *Inward Calling*: Tender thyself to those that have the Power of Admission for thy *outward Calling*; which once obtained, thou art certainly in thine own proper Course: Up and be doing, for the LORD hath called thee, and (no doubt) the LORD will be with thee.

These Dictates of that Right Reverend PRELATE, I own as my Sentiments; and will continue so to do, till I see better Reason, than I have yet met with to the contrary.

Sic Subscribitur

Al----r W---d.

Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo.

An

An ENQUIRY into the
INWARD CALL
 TO THE
HOLY MINISTRY.

Being a REPLY to the foregoing

QUERIES and ANSWERS.

SECT. I.

Remarks upon the Doctrine of Bishop Sanderson, concerning this INWARD CALL to the Holy Ministry. Shewing, that Education, Abilities, and Inclination, though concurring, are not sufficient to satisfy the Conscience, with respect to it, so as to qualify Candidates to answer affirmatively to the Ordaining Bishop's Question, relating to it.

SO far as *Candidates* of the *Holy Ministry* are concerned in this *Enquiry*, we cannot better manage it, than by having our Eye upon that *serious Question*, with respect to this Matter, "Do you trust that you are *inwardly* moved "by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this

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“ Office and Ministration, to serve God, for
“ the Promotion of his Glory, and the Edify-
“ ing of his People?” For every one who en-
ters into *Holy Orders* according to the *Ordinal*
for that End appointed by the *Church of En-*
gland, must answer to this Question solemnly
proposed to him by the *Bishop* who conveys
the *Holy Orders*.

Now, if one that is Conscientious, shall
have any Doubts or Scruples concerning this;
how shall he satisfy his own Conscience? If
his *Education* hath been in order to fit him for
that holy Employment, If his *Abilities* are com-
petent, and if he finds in himself an *Inclination*
that way: is he to rest in that happy concur-
rence of *Education*, *Abilities*, and *Inclination*,
and to make no farther Enquiry? Can he safely
affirm, That he is *inwardly moved by the Holy*
Ghost, to enter into this high and holy Office,
to become in his Station, a Representative and
Delegate of the Mediator JESUS CHRIST, if
he has nothing more, *inwardly calling him*
thereunto, than these do amount to?

IN order to the clearing of this Case of Con-
science, the following Considerations are hum-
bly offered.

First, EDUCATION, with an eye to that Holy
Function, is certainly very convenient and de-
sireable, *Now* when *Extraordinary Gifts* are
ceased; yet it is not *absolutely necessary*: For it
hath often happened, that Persons who have not
been *educated* with any View to this, have been
very useful, and highly eminent in the Holy
Mini-

Ministry. And even altho' such *Education* were absolutely necessary ; yet it is merely *External*. And therefore, though it doth well consist with an *Inward Call* or *Motion of the Holy Ghost*, yet it can have no share in it.

Secondly, *PREVIOUS Abilities* were not required, in the Holy Apostles, and many other inspired Persons, in the primitive Times ; yet *Now, Ordinarily*, they are necessary in some competent Degree : and this too, both of the Body, and the Mind. But these do only relate to the Sufficiency and the Fitness of the Persons who are Called to this Office ; and of them, the Rulers of the Church are the Judges, by whom they must be *Outwardly* tried ; For they are to be discerned in an *External Manner*. And besides, the Bishop who proposeth the Question, under our consideration, to the Person who receiveth *Holy Orders*, is supposed to be already satisfied with regard to them. And therefore, here also, there can be nothing of this *Inward Motion*, or *Call*, which is the Subject of our *Enquiry*.

I THINK by what is briefly hinted, it is sufficiently evident, that neither *Education*, nor *Abilities*, have any Claim to be regarded, as *constituent* parts of this *Inward Call* : I proceed therefore,

Thirdly, To consider the third and last Branch of Bishop *Sanderſon's* Rule, viz. *Inclination*.

AND here I remark, that many have been Called to this holy Office, as far against their *Inclination* as it was against *Jonah's Inclination* to

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go to *Niniveh*. Many eminent and pious Church Men have long and obstinately declined the weighty *Office*, retiring, and hiding themselves to avoid it. In the primitive Times, some who were not yet Baptized, were sometimes *Called*, and in a manner constrained to be *Bishops*, as well as *Presbyters*: and then they were supernaturally endowed with the proper Qualities, both *Internal and External*, which rendered them fit for these *Offices*, by the plentiful Effusion of the *Holy Spirit*, which did abundantly ratify their *External Call*; and was a sufficient intimation, that God did approve the Choice, notwithstanding the reluctancy of the Persons that were preferred; who therefore were not suffered to give way to their own *Inclination*: By which it is obvious, that in those times of greatest Purity, they did not always think the *Inclination* to be absolutely necessary.

AND now, having made these *three* Observations upon the *three* several Things, in the happy Concurrence of which, Bishop *Sanderson* doth place the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry; I must confess I am not capable to imagine how a Man's *Inclination* to be a Minister of the Gospel, though in concurrence with a suitable *Education* and highly *accomplish'd Abilities*, can without any other Considerations, and from those alone, satisfy his own Conscience, so as to make him safely, answer affirmatively to this Question, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve GOD for the promoting*

promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People?

IF *Education* hath nothing in it, that is properly *Internal*, because it is only derived from an extrinsical application of the Teacher, to the human Capacity; then, tho' it were necessary, as it is not always, surely it can have no part in this *Inward Call* and Motion: and if the *Abilities* of the Person are to be tried, discerned, and judged of, *Externally*; and if the Bishop who proposeth the Question is already satisfied concerning them; then certainly, tho' now they are necessary, by reason that *extraordinary Gifts* have ceased; yet it is manifest that they can have nothing to do in this Question of an *Inward Call*. And that a mere *Inclination* to undertake this holy Office, (which Bishop Sanderſon calls an *Inclination of Nature*; and in another place of the same Sermon, a kind of *Desire to be doing something that way*) should be warrantably concluded to be an *Inward Call and Motion of the Holy Ghost*, only because the Person so *inclin'd* hath had a suitable *Education*, and has *Abilities*; seems to me a *Paradox*, especially seeing at the same time, this *Inclination* of the Person to be promoted is not itself always absolutely necessary.

I HAVE ever thought, that an *Inclination*, either merely Natural, or excited by sinful Motives, is not to be considered as an *Inward Motion and Call of God*: And I am well assur'd that a Person duly Educated, and of competent *Abilities* too, may desire to be promoted to this
holy

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holy Office, sometimes by an *Inclination* that is merely *Natural*; and often also when the *Inclination* is excited by *sinful* Motives, which surely is rather an *Inward Call* of the Devil than of GOD.

If an *Inclination* that is merely *natural*, because accompanied with an *Education*, even of the greatest exactness, and with *Abilities* that are either merely *natural*, or acquired in a *Natural way*; can warrantably set up for an *Inward Call* and *Motion* of the *Holy Ghost*; then, I am quite mistaken, and I am much more so, if it is not Blasphemy to affirm this, when the *Inclination* is excited by *sinful* Motives.

For the Reasons mentioned, I was ever dissatisfied with Bishop *Sanderſon's* Resolution of this important Case of Conscience, in his Sermon on 1 *Cor.* vii. 24. with all due reverence to the Memory of ſo great a Man, and a Caſuiſt ſo celebrated. And the more I conſider the Matter, I am ſtill the more diſſatisfied therewith: And therefore under correction of thoſe who are more wiſe, and learned, I ſhall in the following Section, humbly offer, what, in my thoughts, may be proper to direct and ſatisfy the Conſcience, ſo as one may ſafely answer affirmatively to the above-mentioned *Queſtion*, when propoſed to him by the Biſhop: and this ſhall be done with all the Brevity and Plainneſs that I can.

SECT.



SECT. II.

Shewing, how the Conscience of a good Man, may be satisfied, so as safely to answer affirmatively to this Question: "Do you trust that you are Inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve God for promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying of his People?"

A QUESTION so awful and serious, proposed with such Solemnity, doth certainly require of every Man who will answer affirmatively to it, the most mature and deliberate Examination of his own Heart. It is of a tremendous Nature, and demands the clearest Conviction, before one shall presume deliberately to answer it, as every Candidate pretends to do. To answer it rashly, and without a full Satisfaction of Mind, is highly criminal in the Sight of GOD, who *searcheth the Heart, and trieth the Reins*; what an affronted Boldness is it, to enter with a Lie solemnly uttered, into a *Trust* of so great Importance, to the Glory of GOD, who gives the *Trust*, and the *Care* of Souls committed to it, in the Extremity of Danger?

HAVING, I think, in the foregoing Section, abundantly detected the Mistake of the learned and celebrated *Casuiſt*, Bishop *Sanderſon*, with regard to the Case of Conscience under view; I

now proceed to offer what I conceive to be the due and true Solution of it.

AND in order to this, I desire it may be minded, that in the *Primitive Times*, they had *the Gift of discerning Spirits*. 1 Cor. xii. 10. And thereby they knew the *inward Motives* by which the Persons to be promoted to *Holy Orders*, were acted and determined to dedicate themselves to those holy Employments, whereas *now*, these *Inward Motives* cannot be pried into: And all that can be done, in our later Ages, is to enquire narrowly into the Fitness of the Persons who are to be promoted, by *External Examination*; and it is to supply the want of this *Gift of discerning Spirits*, that this Question is introduced. And if Hypocrites will dissemble, there is no help for it. The great Searcher of Hearts hath *now* left no other Mean but this, *viz.* To charge the Person solemnly with respect to his own Conviction, of his being *Inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon him this holy Office*, and to rely on his own solemn Assertion; and if he doth prevaricate, he shall certainly answer to G O D for his vile Hypocrisy.

B U T if he is a Conscientious Man, and cannot safely rest on such Evidences of his being *Inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost*, to undertake this holy Office; as his *Education, Abilities*, and *Inclination*, can afford him; by what means shall he satisfy his own Conscience, so as he may be able, with Truth and Sincerity, to answer affirmatively to the Bishop's Question? Must an Angel be sent to assure him of it? or is it necessary

cessary that he have a Voice from Heaven to satisfy him? No: neither of these are necessary. And though a Man should have the Favour of them both, yet they are meerly *External*: And therefore, although any one of them were sufficient to assure the Man, that God did *Call* him; yet they can never constitute an *Inward Call and Motion of the Holy Ghost*.

WELL then, must he expect to have some *extraordinary Work of God's Spirit within him*, assuring him that he is *called of God*? To this, the Answer of Bishop *Sanderſon* is, That if it shall please God to afford any such gracious Assurance, by some extraordinary Work of his Spirit within the Person; he is to embrace it with Joy and Chearfulness; and indeed none who own a Deity can deny the Possibility of such extraordinary working of God's Spirit, upon the Mind of his own Creature. But with the same learned Bishop I do agree, that we are not to suspend our Resolution, in Expectation of this extraordinary Assurance; no extraordinary Things are not ordinarily to be expected; for there are ordinary Means, by which we may receive a comfortable Satisfaction. And this is the great Happiness of the *Christian Church*, in our later Times of Profaneness and Hypocrisy, when there are so many false Pretenders to such extraordinary Working.

AND here by the way, I must express my Astonishment, that a Man so devout as well as learned, as the excellent Bishop *Sanderſon* was, should lay so great Stress on these three Things,

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Education, Abilities, and Inclination; and yet in all his Management of this *Question*, never so much as once make mention of *Holiness*; which when the *Question* is, How one may be convinced that he is *Inwardly Called* and *Moved* to become a Minister of the Gospel, may seem at least to deserve a fourth Place. Indeed, an outward holy Life, like the other external Things, comes under the Cognizance of humane Trial; and therefore, by what is already said, it seems to be pretty evident, that this falls not under the *Ordaining Bishop's Question*. However, where the Person to be *Ordained*, is truly conscious of the *Inward Sanctity* of his own Heart, if such a Person is *outwardly Called*, in a due and regular Way, according to GOD'S Word, and the laudable Rules and Constitutions of the particular Church whereof he is a Member; and hath satisfied those whose Concern it is to enquire into his *Abilities*, the Piety of his outward Life, and the external Profession of his Faith and *Orthodoxy* of his Principles; I'm sure that this Man hath something more to satisfy his own Conscience, concerning the Bishop's *Question*, (under view) when it is proposed to him; than any Evidences which his *Education, Abilities, and Inclination*, can be able, without this, to afford him. But still, I think, there is something yet wanting to render it safe for the Person who enters into *Holy Orders*, to Answer affirmatively to the Bishop's above-mentioned *Question*.

AND that this may the more easily manifest itself to the Conscience of every serious Enquirer; let

let it here be layed down as a *Principle* that cannot be denied: That as all who enter into *Holy Orders*, ought to be sincerely Holy, both in their Heart and Life, and replenished with all the necessary Christian Graces; *so ought they in a special Manner to be endowed with the fervent Love of JESUS CHRIST their Saviour.* And indeed, it is surprising, that a Divine so pious, and so accurate a *Casuis*t, as the Learned Dr. SANDERSON was, should omit to mention the eminent Degrees of this Divine Grace, which ought to be warm and powerful upon the Hearts of all the *Candidates* of the Holy Ministry; especially considering the remarkable Words of our blessed SAVIOUR himself, to the Apostle St. Peter in St. *John*, ult. 15, 16, and 17 Verses; when that Apostle was graciously restored by our LORD, to the Dignity which he had justly forfeited by his Fall and heinous Guilt, in denying his Master thrice, and at the last Time, with Solemnity; Oaths, and Cursing.

OUR Saviour says to him, in Verse 15, *Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?* and the Apostle answering, *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee:* He saith unto him, *Feed my Lambs.* Again, in the 16th Verse, our Lord saith unto him the second Time, *Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* and upon his answering again, *Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee:* He saith unto him, *Feed my Sheep.* And as the criminal Denial had been *thrice*, so in the 17th Verse, his Master said unto him the third Time, *Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me?* and the Apostle being grieved, because he said unto him the third Time

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Time, *Lovest thou me?* answered, *Lord, thou knowest all Things; thou knowest that I love thee:* and JESUS said unto him, *Feed my Sheep.*

FROM all which circumstantiated Part of the Sacred History, there is nothing can be more obvious than this: That all they who enter upon the *Pastoral Care*, ought to find in themselves *Two necessary Qualifications*, viz.

First, EMINENT and high Degrees of Love to our Saviour, whose Commission they are to receive for feeding of his Flock. The Necessity of this Qualification is evident, by the *Question* here so solemnly proposed to this Apostle, by his Lord, at the restoring him to his Office; which is not only *once*, and a *second* Time inculcated; but for a greater Solemnity, and the more effectually to draw a due Regard to it, it is the *Third* Time reiterated; a Circumstance so peculiar, that it cannot fail to draw and engage a more special Attention.

Now, wherever those Degrees of this Love to JESUS CHRIST, that are necessary for a Minister of the Gospel, are kindled by his Holy Spirit; this exuberant Love cannot fail to exert itself by a fervent Zeal to promote the Glory of this beloved GOD and Saviour; Love is an active Principle; and if the Love of JESUS CHRIST is intense and sincere, the natural Effect of it will carry those in whom it dwells, into every Exertion that may best conduce to testify and express it. And who can remember that it was Love to Mankind; for their Redemption and Salvation, that did draw this Lover of Souls from the

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the Regions of Glory into a Life of Misery and Sufferings; and not be sensible, that the Love of Souls, and a warm Desire of their Salvation, is thereby pointed out, unto all his Disciples, as a principal Exertion of their Love to him? His own glorious Example, and the great Variety of Precepts he has given to inculcate this Love to Mankind, may well suffice to prompt all Christians to this Duty.

BUT above all, and yet more especially, the Ministers of the Gospel to whom the Care of Souls, and of their Salvation, is particularly delegated and committed; they, I say, more especially have the zealous and affectionate Exertion of this Duty, in a *pointed Manner*, inculcated and recommended to them, in the Person of St. *Peter*, when restored to this Dignity and Sacred Office, after his foul Apostacy, in this notable Transaction; *Feed my Lambs, Feed my Sheep*; and again, *Feed my Sheep*. And it is obvious, that this is demanded of him, as the greatest Testimony and Evidence of the Sincerity of the Love he professed to his Lord and Master.

IT were easy to multiply Texts from the *New Testament*, pointing to this same Purpose, especially from the Epistles of St. *Paul*: But I shall only here farther mention, that both the Sanctity of the Persons imployed in the Holy Ministry; and the Zeal they ought to have for the Good of Souls, seem to be plainly intimated in these Words of our Saviour to St. *Peter*, recorded *Luke xxii. 32. When thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.* And therefore I add,

Secondly,

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Secondly, THAT besides the mentioned *exuberant Love to JESUS CHRIST, and a Zeal for his Glory*; it is further necessary, as an indispensable Qualification, that the Person who is to receive *Holy Orders, find also in himself, a warm and affectionate Zeal for the Good and Salvation of Souls, whom JESUS CHRIST hath purchased with his precious Blood.*

AND hence, upon the whole, I humbly conceive, that when the Person to be promoted to the *Holy Ministry*, is duly fitted by the Qualities and Endowments that are to be *outwardly tried*; and is in a regular Way *externally called* and approved; and is conscious also of the *Internal Sanctity* of his own Heart; if he finds in himself the mentioned *affectionate Zeal for the Glory of his God and Saviour, and the Good and Salvation of Souls*, determining and *moving him inwardly*, to dedicate himself to that Sacred Employment; he has good Reason to conclude with Comfort, that this *Inward Motion* is the Work of GOD'S *Holy Spirit*; and may safely answer affirmatively to the mentioned *Question* of his Bishop; *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon you this Office and Ministration, to serve GOD, for the promoting of his Glory, and the Edifying his People?*

I do not affirm, That it is unlawful for one who enters into *Holy Orders*, to have under his View, a moderate and prudent Concern for his worldly Subsistence. Men are not Angels, and the bountiful GOD hath made it our Duty, by lawful Means, to provide for the Support and
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Maintainance of this frail Life; and hath likewise thought fit to order, even with respect to the Support of this Life, that *He who serves at the Altar, shall live by the Altar*, 1 Cor. ix. 13. But under Correction, I affirm, That where this is either the only, or the principal Motive, to enter into *Holy Orders*, the Person is not *inwardly called of God*. The Apostle calls this, *for the Sake of filthy Lucre*. This is not, *to seek the Things of JESUS CHRIST*, and flows from that *Love of the World*, that is inconsistent with the *Love of God*. The chief View of such, is, *to Feed themselves, and not the Flock of JESUS CHRIST*. For tho' a moderate Care of temporal Support, may be a subordinate Motive, or rather *Encouragement* to enter into *Holy Orders*, under due Limitations, yet still,

I do affirm, That he who is not principally determined to the Choice of that sacred Employment, by an affectionate and fervent Zeal for the Glory of his GOD and SAVIOUR, and the Good of Souls, *inwardly moving* and inclining him thereunto; cannot safely answer affirmatively to the Bishop's *Question*, the very *first Question* proposed to all who enter into *Holy Orders*, according to the *Ordinal* of the Church of *England*. And as I humbly conceive, it is chiefly in this, that the *Inward Call and Motion* doth consist, which is the Subject of the said *first Question* of the Bishop.

AND withal, if I am not greatly mistaken, the last Part of that *Question* itself, doth insinuate as much as I have advanced, *viz.* By these

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Words, *To serve GOD for promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his People.*

AND farther too, at the same Time, it must be owned, that there is nothing I have affirmed to be necessary in this Matter, but what one who enters into *Holy Orders*, would be equally bound to satisfy his own Conscience, concerning, altho' the *Church of England* had never appointed such a *Question*.

HOWEVER, there is one Thing to be particularly cautioned, *viz.* That altho' all who enter into *Holy Orders* are bound, indispensibly bound, to be qualified in the Manner mentioned; yet if one who is destitute of this *Affectionate and fervent Zeal, for the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Souls*; which ought to be *the principal Inward Motive* determining to undertake this Holy Employment, shall so far impose on his Bishop by his Hypocrisy, as to obtain *Holy Orders*; in this Case, we are not in the least to doubt of the Validity and Authority of the Ministerial Acts that are performed by him, in the Exercise of his sacred Office. Many bad Men have crept into the *Priestly Office*, as well as *Judas Iscariot* did into the Number of the twelve Apostles, and still it will be so, especially where Honour and Profit do attend it. But if they are duly Authorized in an external Manner, and thereby externally vested with our Saviour's Commission: In this Case, the Sacraments which they Administer, and whatever else, in the Exercise of their Ministry, is with regard to all external Requisites, duly performed and celebrated

ed by them; doubtless they are all truly valid and effectual, to all the Intents and Purposes, for which our Saviour hath instituted and appointed them; deriving their Validity from the *Commission* with which they were vested, and from the Divine Blessing promised by our Saviour, and not from the inherent Holiness of the Administrator. To teach otherwise, would be as great a Snare and Rack to the Consciences of well-meaning Christians, as the hideous *Popish* Doctrine is, concerning the *Intention of the Priest*. But still I affirm, *That no Man is inwardly moved and called by GOD to be a Minister of the Gospel, in an ordinary Way, but he who finds in himself, an affectionate and fervent Zeal for the Glory of his Lord and Master, and the Good and Salvation of Souls, determining and moving him inwardly, to dedicate himself to that Sacred Employment, as the principal Motive of his Choice.* And I conceive this is a Rule that may well be rested on.

THE Whole that hath been treated of in this Section, is of such Importance to all the *Candidates* of the *Holy Ministry*, and so home upon their Consciences, that I need not here suggest the Application. And whoever they are who have entered into *Holy Orders*, without finding in themselves, upon strict Self-Examination, the mentioned Qualifications, or at least *some Seeds* of them, of which there may be reasonable Hopes, that they may in time ripen into a more plentiful Harvest; the first Step they have made in their Promotion, upon due Reflection, if they

are not wholly abandoned, doth naturally tend to awaken in their Consciences, a sharp Remorse; by the Conviction, either of a heedless Regard to a Matter of such an high Concernment, or of a foul and heinous Prevarication and Hypocrisy; and this too, in a solemn Transaction of the greatest Moment and Consequence; and their Case must be sadly desperate, if they are not thereby prompted to a speedy and sincere Repentance, and a serious Care and Study, to atone for their profane Guiltiness, and to supply the hideous Error and Offence given unto GOD at their first setting out, as *Labourers in the Vineyard of their Lord, unto whom they must give an Account of their Stewardship*. And may GOD awaken in the Consciences of all the *Candidates* of the Holy Ministry, an awful Sense of the Importance, of this *first Question* to which they must answer, when they are first introduced to receive *Holy Orders*, that the Answer they make, may be with a deliberate Knowledge of what they go about, and with the Sincerity of an upright Heart!

S E C T.



SECT. III.

Wherein, the Pretence of the Need of any Inward Call for the Choice of Men's Secular Employments, is Examined and Rejected.

IN the first *Section*, I have examined Bishop *Sanderfon's* Sentiments; who placeth the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry, in the happy Concurrence of *Education, Abilities, and Inclination*. And in the Second *Section*, I have represented, and endeavoured to explain, what I think doth truly constitute this *Inward Call*; in order to assist and satisfy the Consciences of those who enter into the Holy Ministry. And it is obvious that I have advanced nothing relating to this, but what every Conscientious Man, who is to enter into *Holy Orders*, must be convinced of its Necessity, although the Need of an *Inward Call* to all who undertake this Holy Employment, were not universally allowed by the Christian Church, and plainly supposed by the *Church of England*, in the very *first Question* that is proposed to the *Candidates* of this Holy Office, by the Ordaining Bishop, according to the established *Ordinal*.

I am now to enquire, Whether there lieth the same Obligation upon those who enter into any *Secular* and *Worldly* Employments, to have an *Inward Call* from GOD, for applying themselves

selves to their particular Course of Life? And whether the same Rules and Means that are necessary to satisfy the Consciences of those who are to enter into *Holy Orders*, (with regard to this *Inward Call*) are also necessary and competent for Weavers, Taylors, Shoemakers, and for Men in the *General*, of all other Worldly Employments?

IT is no less true, than surprising, that this is affirmed by the Learned and celebrated *Casuiſt*, Bishop *Sanderſon*, as his Words are faithfully copied from his Sermon (1 Cor. vii. 4.) in the *Answers and Queries* that are prefixed to this Enquiry. For the *Answers* are truly taken from that *Author*, Word by Word.

HE ſays, “ *Divines teach commonly, and truly too, that every Man ſhould have an Inward Call from GOD, for their particular Courſe of Life.*” And he affirms, that nothing more is neceſſary, to ſatisfy *Ministers of the Goſpel*, with regard to their *Inward Call*, than what is equally neceſſary to ſatisfy every other Man, as to the particular Employment which he is to follow.

Now, what *Divines* they are, who commonly teach, that every Man ſhould have an *Inward Call* from GOD, for his particular Courſe of Life, I know not. — But ſure I am, I have turned over abundance of *Divines*, and in great variety; not only *Casuiſts*, and Systems of *Common Places*, and of *Controverſy*, as well as *Commentators*, *Schoolmen* and *Practical Writers*, and many *Divines*, as well Antient as Modern, until I am wearied of the Labour, ſtill ſearching wherever I could imagine

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gine it might fall in their way to treat of this Subject; and, excepting Bishop *Sanderſon* himſelf in this Sermon of his, I can neither ſee, nor hear of any other *Divine*, great or ſmall, that teacheth ſo. Neither is the Thing he ſays they teach, *true*, in any other or higher Senſe, than it is, if one ſhould affirm, that *Natural Reaſon*, or the *Law of Nature*, and *good Senſe*, and all the *internal Faculties*, and *Gifts of Nature*, are *Inward Calls* of GOD.

BUT let us examine, how this learned Author attempts to prove this ſtrange Doctrine, and we ſhall find his Proof as unaccountable, as his Aſſertion is. The only Argument he advanceth, is this: *viz.* That *St. Paul* in *1 Cor. vii. 7.* hath theſe Words. *But every Man hath his proper Gift of GOD; One (ſays the Biſhop) after this Manner, and another after that: Here (ſays he) is ἑκάστος χάρισμα, ſome called to be Magiſtrates, ſome Miniſters, ſome Merchants, ſome Artiſicers, ſome one thing, ſome another.*

AND is it not ſtrange, that a Man ſo learned, and at other times ſo accurate, ſhould find the *Inward Call*, which he ſays is common to Magiſtrates, Miniſters, Merchants, and Men of all other Trades and Employments, in this Text?

THE Biſhop makes an Apology for his preaching this Doctrine from his Text, to which he doth ingenuouſly confeſs it is not very pertinent. But when he was advancing a Doctrine that is not taught every Day, and which he ſeems to have thought of ſo great Importance, as to excuſe his going beyond the Scope of his Text,

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one may think he should have proved it plainly; being a Man so much habituated to the weighing of Arguments: And when he brings only one Text as the Proof of it, it might be expected it would be such a Text as treated of the Matter in *Question*. But so far is this Text he mentions, from proving, *that every Man ought to have an Inward Call from God, for the particular Employment to which he betakes himself*, that it doth not at all treat of Employments, either of one kind or another.

It is so obvious, that the Apostle, in all the *Context*, both before, and after the seventh Verse of that Chapter, and in that Verse itself, hath nothing under his View, but *Marriage* and the Duties of Married Persons, and *Celibacy*, where God hath bestowed the Gift of *Continency*, that it is surprising to find one affirming, that either *Inward Calls* and *Motions of the Holy Ghost*; or any other Matter relating to Trades and Employments Ecclesiastical or Civil, is there treated of. And unless one should consider Marriage as a Trade to live by, I do not think there is any Man, that hath deliberately read over the *nine* first Verses of that Chapter, who will agree to this learned Man's Interpretation of that Text: *viz.* Verse the seventh. But supposing *Marriage* and *Celibacy* too, were both of them Trades, and both of them also Duties incumbent on different Persons, in different Circumstances; yet what need is there of an *Inward Call*, either unto these, or any other secular Estate, or Course of Life? except it be in such a Sense, as it may be said, that every Man
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has an *Inward Call*, to every thing that he doth, that is either his Duty, or lawful and convenient.

AFTER I had maturely considered that Text, and a great many *Criticks* and Commentators upon it; but could find no body that dreamed of this Sense, to which the Bishop expounds it; I began to suspect some Mystery might be latent, in the Original Words, ἰδιον χάρισμα; but after I had by the Help of a Greek *Concordance*, look'd into all the Places of the *New Testament*, where the Word χάρισμα is used; and considered the different Senses thereof; it being sometimes used for any Gift by which one is gratified; sometimes for extraordinary Gifts, and sometimes applied to the Gift of Eternal Life: After I had consulted both old and later *Lexicons*, (in some of which it is used in a pretty odd Sense, which I shall not name) yet after all this Labour, I cannot find any thing that gives the least Countenance to Bishop *Sanderſon's* Gloſs upon this Text.

INDEED, it is therein insinuated, That every Man is not fit for every Thing; but that Men are only fitted for Things, accordingly as God is pleased to endow them with the suitable requisite Gifts; and that it is only the special *Gift of Continency*, which can render fitted for, or secure ones Chastity in *Celibacy*. But what is all this to the Purpose of *Inward Calls from God*, as necessary to Men who undertake their respective Trades and Employments? unless it be affirmed, That all those Gifts by which Men are fitted for Employments of any kind, are *Inward Calls* of God to those Employments.

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AND because I apprehend this may perhaps be pretended, although it truly seems but whimsical, I shall therefore here mention some Employments that are unquestionably lawful, and as far necessary as the most Part of other Employments, *viz.* Carriers of Burdens, Running-Footmen, and the Employment of those who serve in turning round the large Wheels of some Artificers, &c. Now the Gifts by which Men are more especially fitted for such like Employments, (supposing them to be Men of common Sense, like others) are only Strength, Agility of Body, and good Lungs. And although these Gifts are certainly from God; yet it will be strange, if any shall affirm, That these bodily Gifts, are *Inward Calls* of God, to those Employments; unless it be because good Lungs are *inward*; and in this Sense, I'm sure an hungry Stomach, and a vehement Thirst, are *Inward Calls* of God to Eat and Drink: But I may have Occasion to touch a little upon this hereafter.

MEAN time, it will be proper here to enquire, What it is *that Divines do commonly teach*, with respect to the several Employments of Mankind, and of that which is necessary to determine them to the Choice of their respective Trades and Occupations?

SOME, indeed, do teach, That all Men are pre-determined to their particular Employments, by an Eternal Decree of God. And it is agreed, by all sober Writers, That every Man's particular Station and Course of Life in this World, is allotted to him by the Divine Providence: And thus it is supposed in the *Church Catechism*, *viz.* *To do*
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my Duty in that State of Life, unto which it shall please God to call me. But surely it cannot be in any of these two Senses, that Bishop *Sander-son* makes that *Inward Call* of God, to particular Employments, to consist, whereof he pleads the Necessity; because, neither the Argument by which he endeavours to prove it, nor the Evidences by which he directs to discern it, nor common Sense itself, can allow of this; for none of these mentioned *Doctrines of Divines* can have the least Relation to that *Question* which the *Ordaining* Bishop doth propose to the Candidates of the Holy Ministry; *Doest thou trust, that thou art inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take up-on thee this Office and Ministration, &c.*

WELL, there are also many excellent Writers, who teach with the eminent Divine Dr. *Isaac Barrow*, and very pertinently too, That the Capacity and Abilities (whether of the Body or the Mind, whether natural or acquired) by which God hath fitted and wherewith he hath endowed Men, for the various Occupations of Life, are *Talents* entrusted to them by God; and that we must all render unto God an Account of the Use and Improvement of them; and that they who do not imploy them profitably, are liable to be punished, as the unfaithful Servant (in the Parable) was, who *hid his Talent in the Earth*, St. *Matt.* xxv. But then they do all agree, that in so far as these *Talents* and Endowments (whether of the Body or the Mind) are either natural, or acquired in a natural Way; they are promiscuously bestowed by God upon Infidels and Heathens,

as well as Christians; and on the Wicked and Flagitious, as well as the Godly. And withal, as I have before observed, many of those Endowments are merely External: And farther too, even that Dexterity and Ingenuity, by which the greatest *Artists* are rendered able to contrive with the Head, as well as to work with the Hand; though they are certainly *Inward Gifts and Talents* bestowed by GOD; yet they cannot be so, in any higher Sense, than the very *Human Reason* itself is. The *Understanding*, the *Will*, and the *Apitude* to exert them ingeniously, the *Human Reason* itself, with which every Man is endued, are all of them from GOD, *from whom cometh every good and perfect Gift*, and the due Use and Improvement thereof, as well as the Improvement of all other Gifts and Talents, that are bestowed upon an intelligent Mind, must also be accounted for unto GOD *the Father of Lights, from whom they come.*

Now, if the learned Bishop *Sanderson* did mean nothing more by an *Inward Call from GOD*, which he says, *Every Man should have for his particular Course of Life*, than only such *Inward Gifts*, and natural or acquired Endowments of Mind (which GOD bestows promiscuously upon good and bad Men, upon Heathens and Christians) as render them fitted for one Employment rather than another; if his Meaning is no more than this, That as the *Human Reason*, with which every Man is endued, is an *Inward Call* to act rationally, so are the *Internal Gifts* of the Mind by which Men are fitted for particular Secular Im-

ployments,

ployments, *Inward Calls* to those Employments: Then, this is only an *Inward Call of God*, as it is the Call of natural Reason and good Sense, and of that *Law of Nature*, by which every Man is obliged to employ every Gift of God, to the Glory of his Maker, and the Benefit both of Mankind and himself. And in this Sense, all the Dictates of right Reason, and all the Laws of Nature, by which Men are obliged to any Duty, would be *Inward Calls of God*; which is a way of speaking that is not usual among Men: And withal, at the same time, it is not possible to accommodate this to the serious *Question*, which the *Ordaining Bishop* doth (at his first advancing to *Ordain*) propose to those who receive *Holy Orders*, viz. *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, &c.*

HOWEVER we plainly see, that the Gifts of God, by which Men are fitted for the respective particular Secular Employments, are no more *Inward Calls of God* to those Employments, and in no other Sense, than natural Reason, and good Sense, and all the Laws of Nature, are *Inward Calls of God*. And altho' when the Sense, the meaning of Words, is agreed upon, it is Folly, it is Contentious, to debate about the Words themselves; yet if Bishop *Sanderſon*, or any who espouse his Sentiment, have no other Meaning but this; it is not well done of them, to amuse the World by such Words and manner of Expression, as seem to carry in them a singular Doctrine. For, supposing this to be their Meaning, they had no need of saying any more but *this, viz. That Men*

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Men ought not to enter upon Employments of any kind, for which God hath not fitted them, without any Mention of *Inward Calls from God*; especially when it cannot be conceived, what Relation any such Doctrine as this is, can have to that *Inward Call* by which the *Holy Ghost doth inwardly move* one, to take upon him, the Office and Ministration of the Holy Priesthood.

BUT then farther, if such was the only Meaning of Bishop *Sanderfon*, he might, at least, have spared to assign *Education* as an Evidence of his *Inward Call*; and *Inclination* too. For the *Talents* and *Gifts* of God, do bind unto a suitable Use and Improvement of them, though the Education hath not been in order to this; and though a Man should be as little inclined to the due Use and Improvement of them, as that *unworthy Servant* (in the Parable) was, who *hid his Lord's Talent in his Napkin*.

AND it may be here again also farther hinted, that all those *Talents* that are merely *External Gifts*, though they should be accounted necessary, in order to determine Men to those Employments for which they do most naturally qualify them; yet it must be very wild and ridiculous, to affirm they are *Inward Calls of God* to those Employments; as in the obvious Cases which I formerly mentioned, of *Carriers of Burdens*, *Running-Footmen*, and they who serve in turning round the large Wheels of some Artificers, as also the *Hand-Barrow*, and others that might be instanced.

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AND finally, by what I have briefly represented, in explaining the *Inward Call*, of which every Man who enters into *Holy Orders*, doth always affirm that he hath it, in answer to the *Question* of his Bishop; it doth plainly appear, that the *Call of God* by *Talents*, either natural, or acquired in a natural Way, even *Inward Gifts*, as well as Bodily and Outward, is quite another thing, and altogether different from and foreign to the *Inward Call* to the *Holy Ministry*; and that the same Rules and Means that are necessary to satisfy the Consciences of those who enter into *Holy Orders* (relating to this Matter) are neither necessary nor competent for Men of Secular Offices, Trades, and Employments.

IT is, indeed, much to be wished, as highly proper and expedient, that Men would prefer (in their Choice) the Employments that are least obnoxious to sinful Snares and Temptations. But to determine Men in the Choice of any Secular Employment, there is nothing farther necessary, than that the Employment be lawful, and useful to the Society in which one doth live; and that they are so far capable to officiate therein, as they may thereby earn a Livelihood: Nay, though one is a good Christian, yet the principal, and perhaps the only Reason that determines him to follow one lawful Employment, rather than another, may lawfully be the Prospect of worldly Profit and Advantage. And from this Motive of greater Profit, Men may lawfully shift about, from one Employment to another; humouring their own *Genius*, and the Temper of those from whom

whom they look for Encouragement, and other Circumstances of things, in the Place wherein they chuse to live. But surely the Case is quite different with regard to the *Holy Ministry*, to which no Man ought to apply himself (though of the best Endowments in other respects) unless he is *principally* determined to do so, by an *affectionate Zeal for the Glory of God and the Good of Souls*. How far he is allowed to look back, after he hath put his Hand unto the Plough, is another Question.

AND now, the more effectually to make it evident beyond all Contradiction, that the Christian World has quite another Sense of this important Question of the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry, than Bishop *Sanderſon* hath dictated; and that it is quite another Thing, a more high and sacred Matter, than what is necessary to Men of Secular Employments; I shall only add, that if the Governours and principal Directors of any Secular Trade or Corporation, should presume solemnly to put this Question, to those who enter into any of their respective Bodies or Societies, *Doest thou trust that thou art inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to enter into this Employment?* the World would cry Shame on their Profaneness. And any who may incline to prostitute the *Inward Call to the Holy Ministry*, by levelling it, as Bishop *Sanderſon* doth, with what he is pleased to name, *Inward Calls of God, to Secular Employments*, may make a fourth Query of this; and try to Answer it, with all the Help that Bishop *Sanderſon's* Sermon doth afford: For it seems to be fully as pat and pertinent

tinent to the Purpose, as any of the *Three Queries* that have introduced our Enquiry.

I HAVE now, not only shewn the Lameness and Deficiency of the *Rule* which Bishop *Sanderſon* preſcribes, for ſatisfying the Conſcience of a *Candidate* of the Holy Miniſtry, in order to one's anſwering (ſafely and ſincerely) to the *fiſt Queſtion* of his Biſhop, at his receiving *Holy Orders*: (*viz.* Sect. 1.) But farther alſo, I have adventured (in Sect. 2.) to pave the Way of all ſuch *Candidates*, in order to their *Self-Examination*; that they may the more diſtinctly put home the *Queſtion* to their own Conſciences, before the *Ordaining* Biſhop does it, dy a due Underſtanding of the weighty Import and Meaning of it, and affording to them a proper and ſufficient *Rule* whereby to judge, how far they can ſafely and ſincerely anſwer it. And for as much as the *Rule* I have layed down (in the ſaid Sect. 2.) requires nothing of thoſe *Candidates*, but what is *neceſſary* to fit them for the Holy Office they are to enter upon, although the *Church of England* had never preſcribed the awful *Queſtion* under our View; and yet at the ſame Time, this *Rule* I have ſuggeſted is ſufficient to ſatisfy the Conſcience in order to the Anſwering affirmatively to it: I cannot therefore forbear to think the *Rule* is ſufficiently eſta- bliſhed, and that the *Inward Call* to the Holy Miniſtry doth certainly conſiſt in a Conformity to this *Rule*. And withal, ſeeing every thing contained in the ſaid *Rule* is plainly neceſſary, though the awful *Queſtion* had never been preſcribed: Therefore the Wiſdom and pious Cau-

tion of the *Church of England*, in prescribing it, is thereby highly manifested. And if the *Candidate* is truly conscious of the Internal Sanctity of his own Heart, and is outwardly Called in a due and regular Way, and hath satisfied those whose Concern it is to enquire into his *Abilities*, the Piety of his outward Life, and the external Profession of his Faith, and Orthodoxy of his Principles; if he shall first set out with an *affectionate and fervent Zeal for the Glory of God, and the Good of Souls*; inwardly moving and determining him to undertake that sacred Trust and Employment, as the principal Motive of his Choice; and duly keeps to this, as he goes on in the Discharge of his Trust, for the lasting Rule of his After-Conduct; it is not possible that the Work of the Ministry can miscarry in his Hand. He will be like a *Paul to Plant*, and an *Apollos to Water*; and GOD will give the *Encrease*.

IN this last and third Section, I have sufficiently shewn, that there is no need of any such *Inward Call* to Secular Employments. A *Notion* which, I suppose, hath been first started by Dr. *Sanderſon* himself; and I have insisted the more fully on the Examination of it, because the very moving of it, and much more the jumbling it together with the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry, hath a natural Tendency to abate the Importance of the Ordaining Bishop's weighty and serious *Question*, proposed always to the *Candidates* at their first Promotion; and to render them less anxious and careful in the necessary previous Examination of their own Consciences; which is
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so wisely guarded against, by the Provision of the Church; and is itself of great Consequence to the Interest of Religion.

THE placing of this *Question* of the *Inward Call* to the Holy Ministry, in a clear Light, is undoubtedly of great Use and Importance. Surely it is highly needful, that all the *Candidates* of that Sacred Function, should have a distinct and due *Idea* of what they are about to affirm, with so great Solemnity, when they enter into *Holy Orders*; to prevent their incurring the horrid and atrocious Guilt, of a most heinous *Hypocrisy* and a blasphemous Mockery of God, when they address to be vested with the Power and Commission of our Blessed Lord, who hath said, *As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*

THE Dignity and Trust to which they are to be advanced, is, to be the *Messengers*, *Stewards*, and *Ambassadors* of God; the Delegates and Representatives of the *Mediator* between God and Man; to *Feed* and *Teach*, *Guide* and *Govern* the *Flock* of JESUS CHRIST their Lord and Master; to comfort, correct, admonish and *warn them in CHRIST'S Stead*, until his Second Coming to judge the World in Righteousness; to be an *Example to his Flock*; and the Dispensers of his Doctrine and Mysteries, and of the Spiritual Medicine that is necessary *to bind up the Broken-hearted*, to cherish and strengthen the Weak and feeble, *to comfort the Disconsolate*, *restore the Straying*, *heal the Diseased*, solace the Languishing to encourage the *Strong in the Lord*, and to prompt and excite the Negligent and Restive; and to watch and guard

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against the Wolves of False-teachers, Hereticks, and Infidels; to be *the Salt of the Earth*, and *the Lights of the World*; to be the distinguished Patterns of Devotion, Humility, Charity, and all good Works; and in a Word, *to become all Things to all Men, that they may gain some* to be the sincere Disciples and Followers of JESUS CHRIST, to rescue Men from Eternal Perdition, and save their Souls.

THIS is *the Office and Ministration* they are to undertake, implied in these Words of the Ordinal; *For the Glory of God, and the Edifying of his People*, and more particularly express'd, delineated, and chalked out in the *New Testament*.

As the Honour and Dignity is great, so is the Task and Burden stupendous: For the Blood of Souls that perish through their Neglect, is to be required at their Hand. The just Sense of this, made an ancient Holy Father to call ~~it~~ *Onus humeris Angelicis formidandum; a Burden formidable to the Shoulders of an Angel*. A Burden, that is only to be duly discharged, by the conscientious laborious Diligence of the *Watchman*, who is *Instant in Season and out of Season, Night and Day, praying exceedingly* for the Divine Aid and Direction of him who hath said, *Ask, and ye shall receive; and my Strength is sufficient for thee; for without him we can do nothing. Paul may plant, and Appollos may water, but it is God who giveth the Increase.*

WITH what holy Awe then, with what solemn and serious Preparation, ought the *Earthen Vessels* that are *Candidates*, to approach; when they

they are to be promoted to this high and holy Trust? In the *Ember Weeks* when the whole Church is offering Prayer to God in Behalf both of the Promoters, and those who are to be promoted, well may this awaken in their Minds, the most serious Thoughts of the weighty *Office* they are about to undertake.

BUT how shall they answer to God, and their own Consciences, if from the Want of a distinct *Idea* of the very first Question to be proposed to them by the Ordaining *Bishop*, they cannot answer affirmatively to it, without the Danger, either of affirming, they know not what, in so tremendous an Affair; or of incurring the Guilt of heinous Hypocrisy, and advancing with Falshood, and *a Lie in their Right Hand*, in the very first Step to their Promotion?

THE frequent Reflection upon what is here briefly hinted, hath often made me marvel, that no accurate and pious Author, of any Nation or Language (so far as I can learn) has ever published any duly digested and deliberate Performance upon this Subject. It is not easy to find so much together, relating to it, as Bishop *Sander-son* hath dropt, (I humbly think unhappily) in his mentioned Sermon; and this too, is only by the way, when he owns that the *Text* he treated of, did not relate to it.

IN the continual current Course of Promotion, to the Holy Ministry; the Demand of some more desirable Performance that may better satisfy and direct the Conscience, seems to be urgent; and the Importance of this *Case of Conscience*, seems
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to require it. This hath prompted me to use my best Endeavour to search into the Bottom of the Subject, in Hope of doing something towards the placing it in a due Light, until some more sufficient Hand shall undertake it.

It is manifest, that the Success of those who labour in the Holy Ministry, doth very much depend on their first setting out aright. Falsehood and Hypocrisy at the first setting out, gives small Hope of a right future Conduct. But the being conscious of having duly entred, encourageth to look for, and gives a greater Title to the divine Blessing and Countenance; which will be still the more encreased by the assiduous Diligence of the conscientious Labourer in the Harvest and Vineyard of our Lord. *And blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.*

I shall close this short Treatise, by declaring an hearty Abhorrence of the fanatical Wildness of all those *Enthusiasts*, who write or speak so, of this Subject, as if nothing could satisfy the Conscience concerning this *Inward Call to the Holy Ministry*, without some extraordinary Impulse and Work upon the Spirit, or some *immediate* private Revelation. The immediate and miraculous Inspiration which was necessary in the first Propagation of the Gospel, hath long since ceased; (at least as to Frequency) because the Need of it is superseded by the Sufficiency and full Confirmation of the Revelation already given; and the plain and rational Account, and Manner in which I have briefly explained this *Question*, doth clearly

clearly vindicate me from all Design of promoting such pernicious Doctrine, as doth truly tend to enervate Religion; and instead of advancing the Credit of the Holy Ministry, for which some pretend to advance and propagate it; the natural Effect of it, is to bring both Religion, and the Ministers of it, into Mockery and Contempt. That sacred Function hath its Dignity and Authority so plainly asserted and fenced, by Divine and Apostolical Institution, in the Holy Scriptures, and primitive Writings in the Times of Miracles, and Inspiration well attested, that it stands in no need of any artful Pretences, or *pious Fraud*, to support its Credit. It is far better to rest on those *solid Foundations* of the holy Ministerial Dignity and Power, which we find in 1 *Thess.* v. 12, 13. and in *Heb.* xiii. 17. and in many other Places of the New Testament, than to set up such absurd and dangerous Doctrine for securing of them, as will, in the End, undermine Religion, and expose the Ministers of it, to Mockery and Contempt.

Directed to the AUTHOR of the QUERIES and ANSWERS.

Absint ab examine, hæresis, profanitas, & pertinacia: Si vero quid humanitûs peccatum sit, humaniter condona & admone.

P. S. IN all the Search I have made, among a great Variety of Authors, I have never found any so distinct Account of the *Inward Call to the Holy Ministry*,

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48 *An Enquiry into the Inward Call, &c.*

Ministry, as is given by *Bullinger*, *Sermonum Decad.* 5. *Serm.* 4. *De Vocatione ad Ministerium Verbi Dei.* pag. 300. Edit. Tiguri. in Officina Christophori Froscoveri, Ann. 1577. viz.

“ Requiritur enim ab Ordinandis, Conscientiæ
“ propriæ testimonium, & vocatio arcana; nimi-
“ rum, qua nobis probe simus conscii; excitatos
“ nos esse, ad hoc Muneris capescendum; non
“ ambitione, non pascendi ventris gratiâ, non alio
“ aliquo affectu pravo; sed sincero Dei timore,
“ atque amore, & ædificandæ Ecclesiæ Dei studio.
“ De qua re, elegantissime & sanctissime scripsit
“ Beatus Paulus in 1 *Thess.* cap. 2.

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F I N I S.



